

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE
150 YEARS OLD**

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS PESTICIDE EXAM SCHEDULE

UMASS Eastern Extension Center—240 Beaver St., Waltham

APRIL 19.

APRIL 26. Deadline for submitting application is **APRIL 19.**

MAY 10. Deadline for submitting application is **MAY 3.**

QUESTIONS CALL—617-626-1785.

APRIL 21---NORTHEAST ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION WORKSHOP---Shelburne Falls, MA
CALL—413-528-4387

GROWER-SHIPPERS VOICE CONCERNS OVER SECURITY

By Tracy Rosselle

As federal officials continue to get an earful from industry groups concerned about the scope of new food security proposals, the issue is moving from a latent concern to a top priority for some grower-shippers.

Shortly after the Va.-based United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Association outlined many of its concerns about security guidelines issued earlier this year by the Food & Drug Administration, the Del.-based Produce Marketing Association submitted similar comments to the FDA in late March. PMA cautioned the FDA on two issues about which it specifically asked for feedback—tamper-evident packaging and traceback/trace-forward procedures.

Fresh produce firms already have taken appropriate measures to protect their part of the food supply, but tamper-evident packaging “would be impossible in the fresh produce industry because of the diverse cooling systems used throughout the supply chain,” said PMA vice president Kathy Means.

PMA also advised that the record-keeping required for FDA’s proposals to institute traceback/trace-forward procedures for every produce item is an “unachievable utopia,” complicated by the wide practice of commingling fruits and vegetables in repack operations and on store shelves.

Also in March, the D.C.-based Food Marketing Institute commented on the FDA’s food security guidance documents. FMI, which represents 26,000 retail food stores in the U.S., implored FDA to let individual firms consider which measures best suit their needs.

“FDA must not use the documents as a basis for regulation, facility inspection or enforcement actions against food industry operators and should likewise ensure that the state and local regulatory bodies are aware that the guidelines are intended to be used only as guidance for industry,” FMI president Tim Hammonds said in his comments.

As for tamper-evident packaging, which conceivably would make bulk displays a thing of the past, Hammonds said, “Tamper-evident packaging should be employed where its use can be accomplished reasonably and effectively. ...However, if (it) would involve excessive cost or difficulty (e.g., wrapping apples individually) or would affect the quality or safety of the product (e.g., crusty french bread or leafy green vegetables enclosed in air-tight packaging), its use would be unreasonable.”

Donna Garren, United’s vice president for scientific and technical affairs, said her group’s Food Security Task Force hopes to release its produce industry-specific guidelines by May. She said elements in bioterrorism bills already passed by the House and Senate, and now in conference committee, could be excessively reactive to the events of Sept. 11.

A major concern among industry groups and individual firms: that the FDA is being granted unprecedented expansion of its authority to regulate.

Until now, however, food security hasn’t registered as a top priority among many in the supplier community.

Some grower-shippers point out, for example, that the fresh produce supply chain simply isn’t an efficient way for a terrorist to deliver an attack on the population at large.

Butch Corda, general manager of Calif.-based Growers Express, said his firm fielded some initial questions about its food security in the immediate aftermath of Sept. 11, but the issue has subsided since.

Growers Express showed buyers, for example, its increased internal security and tightened access to ranches, he said.

Others say food security remains a priority, although buyers may not be asking them to do anything in particular. Mostly, growers remain concerned about federal officials overly emboldened in the war against terrorism.

That people actually are talking about something like tamper-evident packaging for the produce industry is reason enough to be concerned, they say.

"It's completely irrational, yet when I think about things like the Endangered Species Act and all the mandates we've had to put up with in the Northwest, nothing would surprise me," said Tom Mathison, president of Wash.-based Stemilt Growers Inc.

(Article from *THE PACKER*, April 8, 2002)

FRUIT INDUSTRY STILL PITCHING IN

The victims of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 have not been forgotten, and New York's apple industry continues to step up to the plate. During the week of March 10-17, the state's retailers featured locally grown Empire apples in their weekly circulars. "Empires Across New York" was expected to raise over \$40,000, with more than 25 retailers participating.

(Article from *AMERICAN FRUIT GROWER*, April 2002)

APPLE SHIPMENT TRACKING

Source: USDA

Amounts are shown in units of 10,000 pounds

Season Begins	03/24/02- 03/30/02	03/17/02- 03/23/02	03/25/01- 03/31/01	Total this season 03/30/02	Total last season 03/31/01
SEPTEMBER					
	11,670	10,568	13,300	285,316	330,473

MID-WEEK F.O.B. PRICES AT MASSACHUSETTS COUNTRY SHIPPING POINT

Prices and grades received by telephone, APRIL 17, 2002

Controlled Atmosphere

VARIETY	GRADE	SIZE	PRICE
McINTOSH	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. Extra Fancy	80s	19.00
		96s	18.50
	Cartons Film Bags U.S. Fancy	12-3s 2-1/2" min	12.50
	Cartons Tote Bags U.S. Fancy	8-5s 2-1/2" min	14.00
EMPIRE	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. Extra Fancy	80s	18.00
		96s	17.50
	Cartons Film Bags U.S. Fancy	12-3s 2-1/2" min	11.50
	Cartons Tote Bags U.S. Fancy	8-5s 2-1/2" min	13.00
RED DELICIOUS	Cartons Tray Pack U.S. Extra Fancy	80s & 88s	13.50
	Cartons Film Bags U.S. Fancy	12-3s 2-1/2" min	11.00
	Cartons Tote Bags U.S. Fancy	8-5s 2-1/2" min	13.00

FEDERAL MARKET NEWS SERVICE, EVERETT, MASS.

APRIL 16, 2002

Controlled Atmosphere

NEW ENGLAND			
McINTOSH	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. Extra Fancy	80s & 96s	18.00
		100s	20.00-21.50
		120s	15.00
	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. Fancy	80s & 96s	11.00-12.00
	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. No. 1	80s	12.00
		100s	9.00- 9.50
		120s	10.00-11.00
		140s	9.00-10.00
	Cartons Film Bags U.S. No. 1	12-3s 2-1/4" min	10.00-11.00
CORTLAND	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. No. 1	72s	15.00
		80s	12.00-15.00 mostly 15.00
	Cartons Film Bags U.S. Fancy	12-3s 2-1/4" min	15.00-16.00
GOLDEN DELICIOUS	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. Extra Fancy	80s & 88s	20.00
ROME	Cartons Cell Pack U.S. Extra Fancy	64s	20.00
	Cartons Film Bags U.S. No. 1	12-3s 2-1/2" min	12.00
SHIPPED IN			
McINTOSH	NY Hudson Valley Ctns CelPk U.S. ExFcy	80s & 100s	19.00-21.00 mostly 20.00
	Lake Champlain Ctns CelPk U.S. ExFcy	80s	22.50-23.50
		100s	20.00-22.00
	NY Hudson Valley Ctns CelPk U.S. No. 1	80s	11.00
		100s	10.00
		120s	9.50
	NY Hudson Valley Ctns FlmBg U.S. ExFcy	12-3s 2-1/4" min	10.00
EMPIRE	NY Hudson Valley Ctns CelPk U.S. ExFcy	88s	16.00
		100s	15.00
	NY Hudson Valley Ctns FlmBg U.S. ExFcy	12-3s 2-1/2" min	9.00
		12-3s 2-1/4" min	9.00
RED DELICIOUS	NY Hudson Valley Ctns TryPk U.S. ExFcy	80s	15.00
		88s	14.00
	Western Section Ctns TryPk U.S. ExFcy	80s	16.00
		88s	15.00
		100s	13.50
	WA Cartons Tray PackI WAExFcy	64s	16.00-17.00 fine appear. 19.00-21.00 mostly 20.00
		72s, 80s, 88s	16.00-17.00 fine appear. 19.00-21.00 mostly 20.00-21.00
		100s	16.00-17.00 fine appear. 18.00-20.00
		113s	16.00-17.00
		125s	15.00-18.00 mostly 16.00-18.00
GOLDEN DELICIOUS	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	64s	26.00-27.00
		72s	26.00-27.00 mostly 26.00
		80s	23.00-24.00 mostly 24.00
		88s	24.00-24.50
		100s	22.00
		113s & 125s	18.00
	WA Cartons Cell Pack WAExFcy	80s	26.00-27.50
		96s	24.00-25.50
ROME	NY Hudson Valley Ctns CelPk U.S. ExFcy	80s	15.00

	NY Hudson Valley Ctns FlmBg U.S. ExFcy	12-3 2-1/2" min	9.00-10.00
RED ROME	PA Cartons Cell Psack U.S. ExFcy	80s	15.00
CRISPIN	NY Hudson Valley Ctns CelPk U.S. ExFcy	56s	15.00
		72s	16.00
		80s	15.00
ROYAL GALA	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	88s	28.00
FUJI	PA Cartons Tray Pack U.S. ExFcy	100s	19.00
	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	64s	23.00
		80s	23.00-25.00 mostly 24.00
		88s	22.00-25.00 mostly 24.00
		100s	21.00-22.00
	Western Section Ctns FlmBg U.S. ExFcy	12-3s 2-1/2" min	13.00
JONAGOLD	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	80s	22.00
CAMEO	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	72s	25.00
		80s	24.00
		88s	24.50
BRAEBURN	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	80s	24.00
		88s	24.50
PINK LADY	WA Cartons Tray pack WAExFcy	88s	30.50-34.00 mostly 31.00-32.00
GRANNY SMITH	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	64s & 72s	26.00-28.00 mostly 27.00
		80s	24.00-27.00 mostly 25.00-26.00
		88s	23.00-25.00 mostly 23.00-24.00
		100s	19.00-21.00 mostly 20.00
		113s	18.00-19.00
	125s	17.50-18.00	
	WA Cartons Tray Pack WAExFcy	12-3s 2-1/2" min	16.00-17.50
CIDER	New England Preserved Cartons	4-1 gallon bottles	9.00- 9.40 mostly 9.00
		9 ½-gallon bottles	10.00 best 11.25
Howard Vinton, Editor			

